



Discover  
the hidden  
Gambia

**Ninki Nanka Trail**

 PRODUCT MANUAL

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# Map of the Ninki Nanka Trail



Source: ASSET (2013) Ninki Nanka Trail feasibility study funded by World Bank Gambia Growth & Competitive Fund. Design by Art Hotel. Illustration by Nigel Kirton  
 Note: TDA - tourist development area or Kombos | These terms are often used as reference to the coastal area of The Gambia.



## About the Ninki Nanka Trail

The trail is a much needed contrast to 'sun, sand and sea' package tourism that builds on the untapped potential of the River Gambia. Aimed largely at the adventure traveller and special interest groups, the trail provides a well-rounded visitor experience. Combining river-based and overland excursions, the trail offers immersive and meaningful interaction with local people (in particular through community-based tourism initiatives). It enables visitors to discover the variety of Gambian natural and culture heritage while experiencing the important oral legend of the Ninki Nanka dragon - a mythical dragon said to reside in the creeks of the River Gambia, with stories providing accounts of both a benevolent dragon bringing great fortune and a malevolent dragon bringing danger and even death.

The trail is a responsible product that aims to disperse economic benefit to rural areas, and to create opportunities for tourism to continue into the shoulder 'Green/Tropical Season'. It aims to take an innovative approach to engaging the private sector in tourism development and poverty reduction in accordance with the concept of shared value and the principles of responsible tourism, creating better places to live and therefore better places to visit.

In 2013, World Bank supported a feasibility study on the trail, a comprehensive amount of market research and product piloting was carried out in order to test the potential of the trail concept further and bring it closer to market-ready.

Since 2017, the International Trade Centre through the EU-funded Youth Empowerment Project has provided support in product development and linkages, marketing and skills training in hospitality, responsible tourism and community-based tourism to bring the trail into operation and continuously improve on local ownership, sustainability, quality, safety, and management.

Starting in November 2019, the product is open for business and is calling for calling on you to be the pioneers of this exciting and inspiring "off the beaten track" experience.



## Why a new product like the Ninki Nanka Trail?

In 2017 a new government came into being in the Gambia with a vision to open up the country to new tourism investment that is inclusive to enhance community participation and greater linkages with other sectors of the economy.

The 2018 – 2021 Gambia National Development Plan made mention to the importance of tourism development to the Gambia. It puts emphasis on promoting an inclusive and culture-centred tourism for sustainable growth; with a tourism product that is people centred, celebrates cultural heritage and contributes to the socio-economic development of The Gambia.

This will be done by diversifying the present tourism product from the coast to the promotion of the Gambia's biodiversity and rich culture through opening up the sector to rural and non-urban based locations. It is expected that these measures will boost tourism arrivals, tap high value market segments and contribute to the employment of more young people and economic growth.

The Ninki Nanka Trail (NNT), which was first conceived in the 80s and opens up-country tourism along the river Gambia, is a good example towards validating such a vision. The trail, which came into being after a comprehensive amount of market research and product piloting for years, is now open for business. It offers an exciting new Gambian responsible tourism destination and product that needs to be managed differently, in a collaborative way that delivers clear benefits for both local communities and tour operators involved.

## Why this Manual?

This manual aims to provide Ninki Nanka Trail responsible tour operators with the key information about what responsible business and operational practices are required to do to ensure that the NNT achieves its' objectives. It will explain what being a responsible tour operator on the trail looks like in practice.

It also provides market information about tourism services, activities and sites along the trail. These include accommodations, restaurants, local guides, ground operators/handlers, boat transport, creative and cultural tour programmes, as well as booking and pricing systems in place for four NNT packages, with the option for additional tailor-made itineraries.

## Who is the Manual for?

This manual is prepared mainly for international tour operators and national ground operators that are considering delivering new, responsible tourism itineraries by sending clients to experience the NNT in The Gambia. By extension, the NNT could also be of interest to those operators doing round trips that include Senegal or West Africa.

This manual also serves as a manual for Gambian tour operators and suppliers taking part of responsible tourism training and business development support from the International Trade Centre. The Gambia Tourism Board (GTB) is responsible for selecting the official entities entitled to use the NNT brand in light of them meeting the eligibility criteria and adhering to the NNT responsible code of conduct. The hope being that it will support operators and suppliers to deliver their NNT packages and business practices responsibly, as well as to communicate the experiences and product on offer to those interested in buying the NNT experience on offer. See Section 6 for details of the NNT Responsible Tour Operators Eligibility Criteria and Code of Conduct.

## Who prepared this Manual?

This Manual is researched and written by Gambian national consultant Adama Bah and international consultant Lucy McCombes under the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) implemented by International Trade Centre (ITC), a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. The project is funded by The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and aims to reduce migration pressures through increased job opportunities and income prospects for women and youth.

The Youth Empowerment Project follows the ITC strategic direction provided by the Youth and Trade Tourism Roadmap, which focuses on the diversification of products, sustainable tourism and services to create opportunities for youth entrepreneurship and employment across the various segments of the value chain and regions of the country.

This manual is part the product development and promotion of the Ninki Nanka Trail for the strategic objective to create new products, market linkages, and value chain development for increased job opportunities for youth. The trail is the umbrella of several tourism experiences supported by YEP in partnership with The Gambia Tourism Board, The National Centre for Arts and Culture, and The Association for Small Scale Enterprises in Responsible Tourism, including community-based tourism initiatives.

**NB: The designations and presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever of the International Trade Centre concerning the legal and political status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities. Content included has been obtained in consult with respective entities, communities, public and private tourism stakeholders.**



# How to use the Manual?

The Manual has been divided into eight (8) Sections to help those using it easily find the information that they need:

## Section 1 | Ninki Nanka Itineraries, Pricing and Accommodation

Section 1 provides detailed information on the four main NNT itineraries along the banks of the River Gambia, two overland and two river-based experiences from 1 to 7 nights. Each of the itineraries have been carefully designed to offer a series of differentiated products/ experiences with unique stories (i.e. interpretation) for each of the main sites visited. The four NNT itineraries covered are:

- ◇ Ninki Nanka Full (River Trip, 7 nights)
- ◇ Ninki Nanka Light (Small) (River Trip, 1 night 2 days)
- ◇ North Bank Experience (Overland, 2 nights 3 days)
- ◇ South Bank Experience (Overland, 2 nights 3 days)

## Section 2 | NNT Activities, Experiences and Sites

Section 2 shares an overview of community-based tourism, the cultural island of Janjanbureh, adventure tours and more.

## Section 3 | NNT Licensed Tour Guides

Section 3 includes a list of local guides associations that service the Ninki Nanka Trail along with their mission goals, services, and contact information.

## Section 4 | NNT Shopping

Section 4 includes a list and description of the shopping sites of locally-made products and souvenirs.

## Section 5 | NNT Tour Operators and Suppliers

Section 5 provides details of tour operators and boat owners selected by the Gambian Tourism Board as the official local providers for the NNT in light of them meeting the eligibility criteria and code of conduct. This selection process aims to ensure both high quality NNT products and maximum local benefits from tourism.

## Section 6 | Responsible Tour Operator Practices

Section 6 provides information on the GTB's NNT Responsible Tour Operator's eligibility criteria and code of conduct, as well as guidance on responsible tourism practices and interpretation of the NNT.

## Section 7 | The Gambia in Brief & Pre-departure Information

Section 7 provides an overview of The Gambia to provide information on the in-country context, as well as guidance on the essential pre-departure information that it is advised that you provided to your guests on the NNT.

## Section 8 | Further information/appendices

Section 8 provides further details to support tour operators with delivering the NNT packages in practice, including cultural guidelines for to share with guests and some festival dates that could be incorporated into the NNT itineraries,

## SECTION 1

# Ninki Nanka Trail Itineraries

The NNT offer adventurous, responsible river-based and overland excursions where visitors can experience the legend of the Ninki Nanka dragon whilst discovering a wide variety of natural and cultural heritage with communities along the River Gambia. Each excursion has a carefully designed interpretation plan to differentiate each of the experiences along the way and highlight the special stories at each of the main stop offs.

A core part of the experience are the community-based tours and homestays created by village communities with the leadership of youth trained on community-based tourism, giving your guests the opportunity to contribute directly to community development and youth employment in a sustainable, safe and feel-good way. These tours are flexible for different audiences to discover the fascinating culture of The Gambia, told by the local community itself, surrounded by beautiful West African fauna and flora.

All the four itineraries on the trail described here are situated on the Southern, Northern and Central River Banks of the River Gambia. Most of the tourism highlights and activities on the **NNT Full** river trip itinerary are situated in the Central River region of the Gambia. It starts from Ndemban to Tabanani Village and Janjanbureh Town by road, and cruise by boat from Janjanbureh down to the Baboon Island to view the wildlife, to Kuntaur to see the Wassu Stone Circles, Njaw's women's recycling project and Kaur then travel back through Juffureh.

The **NNT Light** river trip goes from the city of Banjul to Juffureh on the North Bank. Then the next day crosses the river to Ndemban on the South Bank and back to the coast (known as the TDA – tourist development area) in the evening.

The two overland experiences covers **North and South Banks** visiting many of the same areas along the trail but without any time enjoying cruising on The River Gambia.

These four NNT package itineraries are outlined in more detail below, plus tailor-made itineraries are also possible based on using the NNT components from these itineraries in various combinations to cater to the needs and interests of your guests/groups:

NINKI NANKA TRAIL PRODUCT MANUAL

## Ninki Nanka Full River Trip: 7 nights 7 days (Drive up Cruise Down)

Itenaries	
Day 1	AM Ndemban Jola Village Experience
	PM Ndemban Village Experience (including Jola cultural activities in evening) Overnight at Ndemban homestays for small groups, or alternatively at AbCa's Creek Camp (Bintang Bolong on river) or Sindola Safari Lodge (near Kanali)
Day 2	AM Breakfast with homestays & drive to Tabanani for CBT and Kankurang experience. Refreshment stop at Kaira Konko Scouts Camp (Soma).
	PM Tabanani Village Experience Overnight on board boat or in Baobolong Annex Lodge or Youth Information Centre at Janjanbureh (on the island).
Day 3	AM Visit Janjanbureh Kankurang museum and guided historical/cultural walking tour.
	PM Jamali Fula Village Experience (optional) Overnight on board boat or in Baobolong Annex or Youth Information Centre or Janjanbureh Camp.
Day 4	AM Wildlife spotting/cruise to Baboon Island
	PM Visit Wassu Stone Circles. Cruise to Kaur. Overnight on board at Kaur or at Kauren River Camp for small groups, or alternatively Morgan Kunda Camp (near Illiassa).
Day 5	AM Tour of groundnut station and Wolof cultural exchange in Kaur e.g. meeting village alkalo, grinding millet, musical demonstration. Visit Njaw women's recycling project.
	PM Visit Farafenni market and Morgan Kunda Camp for lunch and bird watching briefing. Catch small pirogue at Katchang landing site for birdwatching to Tendaba Camp. Overnight on board/Tendaba Camp
Day 6	AM Cruise Tendaba to Albreda/Juffureh PM Albreda/Juffureh – including sunset drinks and Mandinka storytelling evening.
	Overnight on board or at Roots Camp.
Day 7	Cruise to Banjul (optional 'All Senses' Banjul market walking tour (including the Arch/museum) or Mandinari River Lodge or Kubune Camp. Overnight in TDA, Mandinari River Lodge or Kubene Camp.



## Ninki Nanka Light River trip: 1 night 2 days

Itenaries	
Day 1	AM 'All Senses' Banjul market walking tour (including the Arch/museum) and cruise to Albreda/Juffureh
Option 1	PM Visit Albreda/Juffureh and cruise to Ndemban homestays (tides permitting). Jola cultural evening in village Overnight at Ndemban homestays (small groups), or alternatively at AbCa's Creek Camp (Bintang Bolong on river) or Sindola Safari Lodge (near Kanali).
Option 2	PM Visit Albreda/Juffureh. Sunset drinks and Mandika storytelling evening. Overnight on board boat or Roots Camp.
Day 2	AM & PM Ndemban Village CBT experience
	Return to TDA

## North Bank Experience Overland: 2 nights 3 days

Itenaries	
Day 1	AM Banjul 'All Senses' Banjul market walking tour (including the Arch/museum) Ferry crossing to Albreda/Juffureh
	PM Albreda/Juffureh Overnight at Morgan Kunda Camp
Day 2	AM Bird watching, Farafenni market, Njaw women's recycling project
	PM lunch at Kauren River Camp (Kaur). Wassu Stone Circles. Jamali Village CBT experience. Evening meal and Kankurang cultural performance. Overnight at Baobolong Annex Lodge or Youth Information Centre.
Day 3	AM Janjanbureh Kankurang museum and guided historical/cultural walking tour
	PM Drive back to TDA. Refreshment stop at Kaira Konko Scouts Camp (Soma) or scenic picnic en route.

## South Bank Experience Overland: 2 nights 3 days

Itenaries	
Day 1	AM Ndemban Jola Village Experience
	PM Ndemban Village (including Jola cultural activities in evening) Overnight at Ndemban homestays for small groups, or alternatively at AbCa's Creek Camp (Bintang Bolong on river) or Sindola Safari Lodge (near Kanali)
Day 2	AM Tabanani Village CBT experience including Kankurang cultural performance.
	PM Lunch and activities at Tabanani. Drive to Janjanbureh. Overnight at Baobolong Annex or Youth Information Centre.
Day 3	AM Visit Kankurang museum and guided historical/cultural walking tour
	PM Drive back to TDA. Refreshment stop at Kaira Konko Scouts Camp (Soma) or scenic picnic en route.

## NNT Tailor-Made Trips

Outbound tour Operators can put together their tailor-made itineraries along the trail in consultation with their ground operators. However, it is recommended that the itineraries follow the trail due to the work that is already done with the various actors.

## NNT Contact Information

For more information on the itineraries, pricing and other content of this manual:

**Adama Bah:**  
adamabah2008@gmail.com  
+220-9917343

**Lucy McCombes**  
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For information from ITC on product development, marketing, business to business inquires, FAM trips and trade fairs:

**Amelia Diaz:**  
adiaz@intracen.org

## NNT Pricing

NNT has a transparent pricing policy meaning that all prices are done in consultation with communities to be visited. It is then circulated to operators for advice before it is approved. In addition the NNT has the following ethical pricing policy:

- ◇ There is a fair price that benefits local people and supports conservation
- ◇ There are fixed prices
- ◇ There is no discrimination when selling to tour operators
- ◇ There is no predatory pricing

Name of Excursion	Cost- at Community level (US\$)	Includes	Minimum
Ninki-Nanka –Full (7 nights -7 days)	542.50 pp	All Sites, Activities, Accommodation, Boat, Ferry crossings and Food	8 passengers
Ninki-Nanka- Light (1night-2 days)	115.85 pp	All Sites, Activities, Accommodation, Boat, Ferry crossings and Food	5 passengers
Ninki-Nanka – South Bank Overland (2 nights-3 days)	150.00 pp	All Sites, Activities, Accommodation, Ferry crossings and Food	5 passengers
Ninki-Nanka- North Bank Overland ( 2 nights- 3 days)	237.00 pp.	All Sites, Activities, Accommodation, Ferry crossings and Food	5 passengers

## NNT Community-Based Tourism Contributions

All community-based tourism villages receive 10% of their tour price as built-in contribution towards their community club for development on their products. Tips are optional.

All communities are asked to identify projects that the funds collected will be invested in. In the Gambia, the local government regulation requires all community development projects to be carried out by a Village Development Committee (VDC). The Ninki Nanka Trail aims to work with identified villages to implement projects and build their tourism products through their VDC in an accountable and transparent manner.

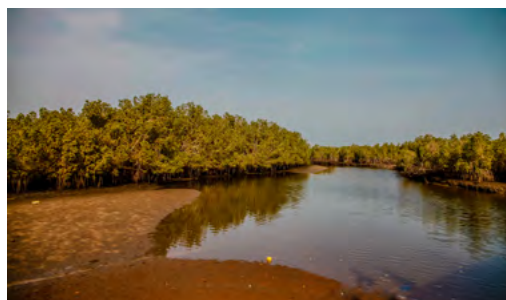
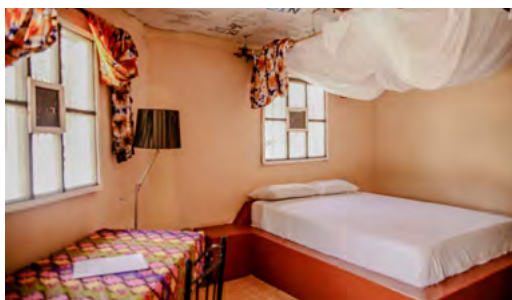
## NNT Accommodation

The accommodation offer in rural areas along the NNT is varied, offering a range of experiences including characterful homestay lodges in family compounds, sleeping on board under the stars, camping on top of a hill looking over The River Gambia, birding and wildlife camps, ecolodges along The River Gambia and more conventional guesthouses and lodges. The standard is generally basic but clean and comfortable, with plans led by the GTB to develop a number of higher end ecolodges along the river currently underway. A short drive away from the riverside, there are a small number of higher end and responsible accommodation options that can be incorporated into NNT packages. A bit further afield, we have also included information on some a small number of 'off the beaten track' responsible accommodation providers to include in NNT packages.

In the main tourist resorts on the coast (known as the TDA – tourist development area) there is a very wide range of accommodation options which vary in terms of their quality and sus-

tainability standards, including 5 Star hotels Gambian hotel classification standard). For more information on the accommodation options available in The Gambia visit (GHA) The Gambia Hotel Association website: <http://gambiahotels.gm/our-members/>

Tour operators will often need to include in NNT packages additional accommodation for their guests at the start and end of the NNT excursion as appropriate to the guests needs/preferences. However, as outlined in the NNT Responsible Tour Operators Code of Conduct, tour operators are asked to prioritise those accommodation providers with sustainable/responsible practices as part of NNT packages and encourage them to work towards an international sustainability standard/certification. The longer term aim is to have the whole destination and entire NNT package reflecting the responsible objectives of the trail and delivering local benefits through tourism.



Accommodation  
Provider

**NDEMBAN HOMESTAYS-  
South Bank**

### Description

Homestay accommodation – Community Based Initiative, local-style accommodation hosted in a family compound.  
Situated heart of Ndemban, a Jola village on river creek.

### # Rooms Types

6x double rooms (with option to add additional single camp bed to make into triple rooms)



### Facilities/ Activities

Community creek-side restaurant for relaxation, cold drinks, local food and toilet facilities  
Guided village walking tour  
Village activities e.g. tie & dye, cooking, dance, cultural activities, bird watching on creek, forest walk, fortune teller



### Main Contact

 Lamin Bojang,  
Senior Product Development Officer, GTB


### Phone/email

  +220 7287731  
Lsbojang@gtboard.gm

### Cost

 \$ 13 pp for double room  
 \$ 3 pp for Breakfast

### Offering period

 Year round



Accommodation  
Provider

## KUNTA KINTEH CAMP- North Bank

### Description

Kunta Kinteh Roots camp is situated in Albreda, along the banks of the River Gambia with a view of the famous Kunta Kinteh Island. The camp is also within a walking distance from the slave museum in Juffureh.

### # Rooms Types

30 Double Rooms with ceiling fan with toilet and shower






### Main Contact

 Njie Cham


### Phone

 7904782




### Facilities/ Activities

-  Access to running water and electricity
-  Boat trips to Kunta Kinteh Island
-  African cultural entertainment on request
-  Bar & Restaurant
-  Conference Hall for 100 participants


### Email

 [kuntakintehroothcamp7@gmail.com](mailto:kuntakintehroothcamp7@gmail.com)

### Cost

-  **\$ 12** per Person shoving a Double Room on BB
-  **\$16** for single occupancy on BB
-  Meal supplement lunch/dinner **\$6** per person

### Offering period

 Year round

### Description

Abca's creek lodge is located in Kassangne village in the Foni district, and is approximately 85km from the resort hotels along the Atlantic coast. The lodge is strategically situated along the banks of the Bintang Bolong creek.

### # Rooms Types

16 Double Rooms  
4 Double Rooms on stilts  
(wooden house on stilts)

### Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Bar/Restaurant,
- ◇ boat trips,
- ◇ walking tours,
- ◇ bike tours,
- ◇ canoe trip,
- ◇ countryside tour with 4x4 vehicles,
- ◇ roots tour by boat to Kunta Kinteh Island and Juffureh,
- ◇ home cooking,
- ◇ fishing trip and tailor made tour.

### Cost



◇ Double Room on BB **\$21.75** per person

◇ Single Room on BB **\$32.50** per person

◇ Wooden House on stilts on BB  
-Double **\$24.80** per person

◇ Single **\$38.50** per person

### Main Contact



Abdul Gaye

### Phone



7994414

### Weblink / Email



[www.abcascreeklodge.com](http://www.abcascreeklodge.com)



[abcagambia@hotmail.com](mailto:abcagambia@hotmail.com)

### Offering period



Year round



## Description

Sindola Safari lodge is situated in Kanilai village in the Foni District. It offers a peaceful, untouched environment amidst numerous palm trees, flowery bushes, baobab trees and bougainvillea.

## # Rooms Types

36 delightful standard rooms and 4 luxury two-room suites, integrated into authentic African Roundhouses with grass roofs and fitted with the latest facilities. The standard rooms can be used as singles and extra bed can be put in for triples.

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Sindola Restaurant,
- ◇ Conference Room,
- ◇ Children Playground,
- ◇ Adult and Children swimming pools
- ◇ Bird sanctuary
- ◇ Fish Pond

## Cost



◇ Standard room single occupancy **\$42**

◇ Standard Room Double Occupancy **\$70.40**

◇ Suite Single Occupancy **\$70.40**

◇ Suite Double Occupancy **\$85.80**

◇ Half Board Supplement **D14.30**

◇ Full Board Supplement **\$28.60**

## Main Contact



Buna Njie  
Fatou Mass Jobe

## Phone



2000324 / 2818672 / 2222202

## Offering period



Year round



## Description

The lodge is located on Janjanburreh Island and strategically situated along the main street of the Island. A quiet and peaceful lodge known for its friendly staff. Ideal for small groups.

## # Rooms Types

10 Rooms with ceiling fan  
9 Rooms with Air-conditioning  
All rooms can be used as single occupancy

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Bar & Restaurant
- ◇ Clean workable flush toilets in all rooms
- ◇ Access to running water
- ◇ Flat screen TV in the Restaurant

## Cost



◇ Rooms with ceiling fan \$12 per person. Breakfast supplement \$4 per person

◇ Rooms with air conditioning \$32 for 2 people shoving and on BB basis

◇ Rooms with air conditioning \$20 single occupancy and on BB basis

## Main Contact



Musa Sigyang  
Alfusaine

## Phone



7315093  
7386152

## Weblink / Email



Baobolongannex@outlook.com



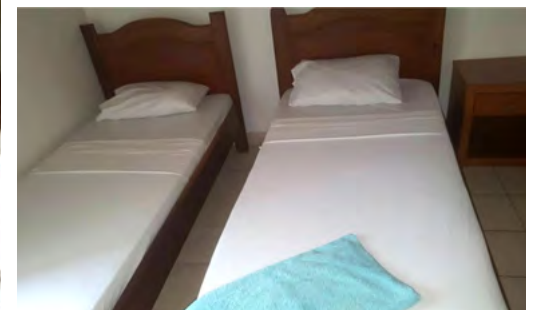
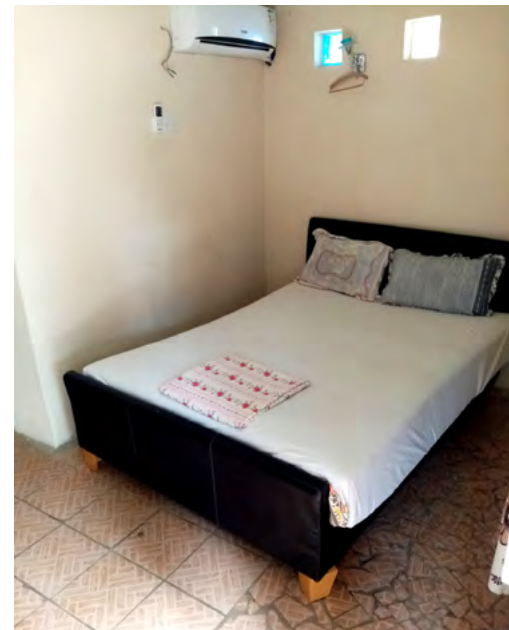
abcagambia@hotmail.com

## Offering period



**High season:** November 1st to April 30th each year.

**Low season/Green Season** may 1st to October 31st each year.



## Description

Located in Janjanbureh on the south bank of the river. This Eco-friendly camp is situated along the bank of the river in the village of Laminkoto. Accommodation consist of African round huts with clean workable flush toilets, but no electricity. Solar lamps are available at strategic areas within the camps and portable solar lamps and candles are available in the rooms. Due to the majestic tropical vegetation, the camp is famous for the variety of resident monkeys that can be seen within the camp, especially during breakfast.

## # Rooms Types

25 twin rooms

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Bar & Restaurant,
- ◇ Boat trips to kuntaur and Kaur
- ◇ Clean workable flush toilets in rooms,
- ◇ Access to running water
- ◇ Cultural entertainment at night.

## Cost



◇ \$9 pp on BB

◇ \$15 pp on HB

◇ \$20 pp on FB

## Main Contact



Bakary Jobe

## Phone



7812332

## Email



[gambiariver@yahoo.com](mailto:gambiariver@yahoo.com)

## Offering period



Year round





## Description

Environmentally friendly retreat located in Kaur Wharf Town in the Lower Saloum District of the Central River Region. With its panoramic view overlooking the magical River Gambia and its unspoilt forest, the site is ideal for birdwatchers and other nature lovers.

## # Rooms Types

2 Double Rooms coupled with availability of tents of various sizes

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Bar and Restaurant (modern kitchen)
- ◇ Good standard toilets and showers with running water on site.
- ◇ Bird watching.
- ◇ Visits to Wassu Stone Circles and River Gambia National Park

## Cost



- ◇ \$20 per person sharing double room

## Main Contact



Dawda Nyang

## Phone



9900545  
7614078

## Offering period



Year round



## Description

A bird watching lodge located in upper Badibu district and situated in Jarjari village, within the Bao Bolong wetland. This lodge is ideal for birdwatchers and nature lovers. The lodge is owned and run by a Gambian registered charity, the Morgan Clark Foundation (Gambia) which donates any profit to the charity.

## # Rooms Types

8 twin rooms with ceiling and floor standing fans in each room.

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Clean working flush toilets in each room and in the public area.
- ◇ Viewing platform for birders
- ◇ Local tour guides
- ◇ Local tours within the surroundings
- ◇ Birding and photography tours

## Cost



◇ Price are based on two people sharing a twin room with suite  
-all inclusive **\$60** per person per day.

◇ Single room supplement **\$20** per person per night. Party of 4 or more will be entitle to complementary stay for the tour guide.

## Main Contact



Bakary  
Jammeh

## Phone



7991204

## Weblink / Email



[www.morgankunda.com](http://www.morgankunda.com)



[contact@morgankunda.com](mailto:contact@morgankunda.com)

## Offering period



Year round



**Description**

Tendaba Camp is located in Tendaba village in the Kiang districtsituated along the banks of the majestic River Gambia.

Approximately one and a half hours drive from the coastal resort along the Atlantic Coast.

**# Rooms Types**

75 double rooms

**Facilities/ Activities**

- ◇ Bar & Restaurant,
- ◇ Swimming pool,
- ◇ Boat trips,
- ◇ Jeep safari,
- ◇ Bird watching,
- ◇ Night Africa Entertainment,
- ◇ WIFI, Internet café and
- ◇ Conference facility for 300 people

**Cost**



◇ Standard Room on BB **\$24.70** per person

◇ Single Room on **BB \$24.70** per person

◇ Riverside Rooms on **BB \$43.20** per person

◇ VIP Rooms on BB **\$38.50** per person

**Main Contact**



Sarjo Touray

**Phone**



9911088 / 9832225 / 7519994 / 6586320 and 3546058

**Weblink / Email**



[www.tendabacampgambia.com](http://www.tendabacampgambia.com)



[info@tendabacampgambia.com](mailto:info@tendabacampgambia.com)

**Offering period**



Year round

## Description

This river lodge is situated along a tributary of the River Gambia in Kubuneh village, on the west coast region of the Gambia

## # Rooms Types

8 double rooms

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Bar & Restaurant
- ◇ Boat trip
- ◇ Cultural entertainment on request
- ◇ Access to electricity and running water

## Cost



◇ **\$15** Per person sharing twin room on bb

◇ **\$20** Per person single occupancy on bb

◇ Buffeh **\$6** per person based on a minimum of 10

## Main Contact



Lamin S.  
Bojang

## Phone



3689112

## Weblink / Email



<http://wunderlandlodge.com/>



[wonderland@hotmail.com](mailto:wonderland@hotmail.com)

## Offering period



Year round



## Description

Located in Mandinari village, Kombo north, situated by a creek that joins the main River Gambia. Only 15 minutes drive from the airport and approx. 35 minutes drive from the coastal resorts along the Atlantic coast. Ideal for nature lovers, especially those interested in birds and fishing. Accommodation consist of 5 self- catering lodges

## # Rooms Types

5 double rooms

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Bar& Restaurant,
- ◇ Boats for hire to explore the creek and the river,
- ◇ Private garden,
- ◇ Fishing trips,
- ◇ Pool area,
- ◇ Mini bus hire to explore the country side,
- ◇ Room safe to keep valuables,
- ◇ Bike rental,  
Services of tour guides.

## Cost



◇ Price per lodge per night **\$74** based on minimum 2 night stay on self catering basis. All lodges have double beds, monsoon shower and room safe. Additional beds can be provided.

◇ Optional continental breakfast **\$6.20** per person.

## Main Contact



Abou Nyang

## Phone



7794555  
3394555

## Weblink / Email



[www.mandinariverlodge.com](http://www.mandinariverlodge.com)



[mandinari@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mandinari@hotmail.co.uk)

## Offering period



Year round



## Description

Mama Africa is a unique accommodation next to Tanji fishing village. Internationally renowned artist, Isha Fofona, has created a charming ambiance: spacious artistic guest houses, an exotic garden together with her unique gallery.

## # Rooms Types

8 Double Rooms

## Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Art work (painting)
- ◇ Bar and Restaurant
- ◇ Airport shuttle

## Cost



◇ Double Occupancy on BB  
**\$110** per room

◇ Double Occupancy on HB  
**\$137.80** per room

◇ Single Occupancy on BB  
**\$88.15** per person

◇ Single Occupancy on HB **\$104.70** per person

## Main Contact



Lamin S.  
Bojang

## Phone



3689112

## Weblink / Email



[www.mama-africa-gambia.org](http://www.mama-africa-gambia.org)



[info@mama-africa-gambi.org](mailto:info@mama-africa-gambi.org)

## Offering period



Year round



### Description

Travelife Gold and Trip Advisor award-winning eco-lodge. Situated at Gunjur 'in the bush and by the beach', where you will find hundreds of birds and some of the most stunning scenery in the Gambia. Wide range of activities available. Impressive sustainability standards and responsible tourism business practices in support of the local community.

### # Rooms Types

9 detached round houses  
2 self-contained wooden  
cabins  
1 Sun house

### Facilities/ Activities

- ◇ Access to electricity and running water
- ◇ Library
- ◇ Spa treatment room
- ◇ Swimming pool
- ◇ Cultural entertainment
- ◇ Bird watching
- ◇ Cycling cultural towns within the surrounding
- ◇ Airport transfer
- ◇ Bar and restaurant
- ◇ Fitness facility
- ◇ WIFI
- ◇ Free beach shuttle

### Cost



- ◇ Single Occupancy BB **\$58.60**
- ◇ Two person sharing on BB **\$40.10**
- ◇ Rate for SBH House **\$105** per night
- ◇ **NB: 20%** discount for NNT bookings April, May & **40%** discount in June.

### Main Contact



David  
White

### Phone



7732060

### Weblink / Email

- ◇ [www.footstepsinthegambia.com/lodge](http://www.footstepsinthegambia.com/lodge)
- ◇ [holidays@footstepsinthegambia.com](mailto:holidays@footstepsinthegambia.com)

### Offering period



Year round





## SECTION 2

# NNT Activities, Experiences and Sites of Interest



A map of The Gambia with various regions labeled: Kaolack, Kaffrine, Koumpentoum, Koussanar, Paoskoto, Farafenni, Bansaing, Basse Santa Su, Velingara, Kolda, Kounkane, Sedhiou, Tanaff, Sitato, and Ziguinchor. The word 'The Gambia' is written across the center. A red diamond marker is placed on the coast near Bansaing. The word 'JANJANBUREH' is written in white capital letters with white brushstroke lines above and below it.

# JANJANBUREH

## ◆ Janjanbureh Island for Cultural, Community-Based and Adventure Tours

Janjanbureh (formerly George Town) is a gem for allowing guests to experience and learn about Gambian traditions. It is an exotic mixture of history and cultural traditions. Highlights of a visit include an historical and cultural tour of this small town led by a local tourist guide involved in a training initiative funded by the Gambia Youth Empowerment Project. This includes visiting the silver smith, former colonial buildings, Freedom Tree and learning more about the Kankurang and other masquerades at the Kankurang Museum.

## Janjanbureh Visitor Centre

The Janjanbureh Centre is ran by licensed young tour guides with ongoing training by The Gambia Tourism Board and The Youth Empowerment Project. It is located within the Janjanbureh Youth Centre under the mission of putting young people as leaders, direct beneficiaries and contributors of tourism development in the area.

The Centre is the entry point to the island and the coordination for bookings, latest information of available tours and events in addition to providing accommodation, a gift-shop, and a welcoming open place to gather groups for start of activities.

Bookings made through the Centre follow well-structured and transparent accounting system that tracks funds payables to community club funds and service providers of the tours. Guides are available for different groups and sizes according to the following activities:

- ◇ Walking tours of Janjanbureh culture and history
- ◇ Community-based tourism village experiences in Jamali and Tabanani
- ◇ River-based kayak tours
- ◇ Bike adventure tours
- ◇ Kankurang Museum and Festival



## Jamali Community-Based Tourism Village Experience

Jamali is a traditional Fula agricultural village with beautiful traditional architecture. Guided visits to this village include an interactive discussion with the village chief, a visit to the wood carver's compound, a lovely walk around the women's organic garden, and tasting delicious groundnut rice pudding. It is a great opportunity for your guests to learn about traditional agricultural practices and the characteristics of Peule culture through their language, dress, music, dance, food and wooden crafts.



## Tabanani Community-Based Tourism Village Experience

Tabanani is an exciting village experience offering guests the opportunity to see and join in with Mandinka greetings, dances and other cultural practices. Upon arrival guests are welcomed by a Kankurang welcoming ceremony – the Kankurang being an initiatory rite practiced by Mandinka communities associated with the transition to manhood and full membership of the community. The Kankurang and other regional masquerades are now on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The cultural experience then continues with a guided walk in the village where guests learn to cook delicious Gambian local foods, meet local artisans, have a go at making a palm leaf fan and then the chance to dance with the Kanyaleng women's group. The Kanyaleng is a very special group of women who take part in spiritual or ritual activities for barren women, as well as provide unique cultural entertainment at wedding, naming and other local ceremonies.

## Kankurang Museum and Festival

The walking tours include a visit to the Kankurang Museum to learn more about the Kankurang heritage, including an exhibition devoted to the masking traditions of The Gambia across many ethnic groups.

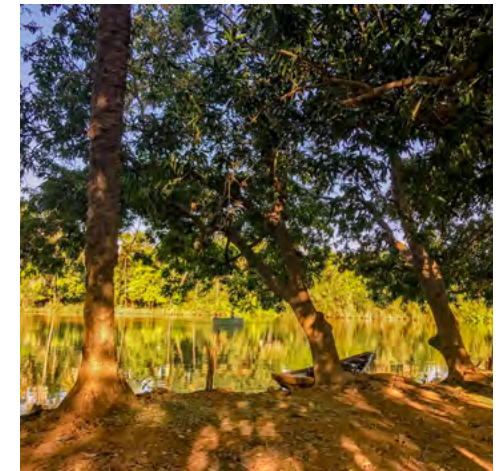
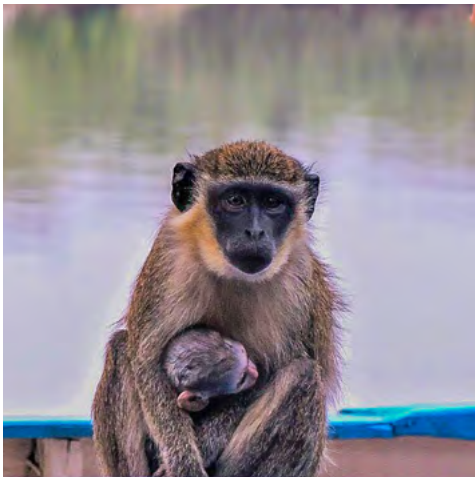
The Kankurang Festival is a unique celebration of the Kankurang and other masking traditions of the Gambia that takes place in Janjanbureh every second weekend in January. The Kankurang, a masquerade tradition associated with the rites of passage or initiation into manhood, is practiced by Mandinka communities in The Gambia, Senegal and Guinea Bissau. It is a very important aspect of local culture which is now included on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The term Kankurang is referred to as a combination of the Mandinka words 'Kango' and 'Kurango' which literally translates as "voice" and "enforce" respectively.



## River-Based Kayaking Tours

Experience all the wildlife and natural beauty River Gambia has to offer in a guided river-based kayaking tour. Available for singles and groups, the kayaks are comfortable and safe for cruising around the river for bird spotting, hippo sighting, magical sunsets, sunrise with the birds and more.

Tour guides are able to provide a lesson on using the easy to paddle sit-on-top kayaks or Canadian style canoes. Tours can be booked for half-day, full day and multiple day excursions.



## Bike Tours of Janjanbureh and Villages

Guided bike tours designed for an adventurous journey along the local rice fields, forestland, pristine meadows and for transportation to the community-based village tours. The trail is along flat land, involves a ferry crossing and a little boat crossing to go outside the island. The adventure involves wildlife and nature.

Bike rentals are also available as needed by visitors to leisurely explore the island.



## ◆ Ndemban Village Experience

Situated just 45 minutes from the Senegambia tourist area, Ndemban offers guests the opportunity to dive deep into local life and immerse themselves into the rhythm of life of this Jola village to experience daily life activities and staying overnight with a home stay family. Guests can take a guided walk of the village to visit the alkalo, bakery, blacksmith; fortuneteller; and community gardens; and join the women's group for cooking, dancing soap making & tie and die making during the day and traditional cultural activities around the campfire in the evening.

Ndemban has a beautiful and characterful community eating and relaxation/restaurant area right by the creek where guests can enjoy refreshments and meals cooked by the local women's group, and relax during the heat of the day in the comfortable seating arrangements. Other activities available include creek tours for bird watching and fishing. There are two forest parks and one of them – Kungbeng - has been sign posted for mangrove forest walks and bird watching.



## River Gambia National Park and the Baboon Island

NNT river trips include a beautiful cruise along the River Gambia which includes the River Gambia National Park, encompassing five small islands dominated by gallery forest, seasonal swamp and savannah. Guests may be lucky enough to spot an extensive range of birds, monkeys, crocodiles and the endangered hippopotamus, the largest remaining mammal in The Gambia. The park also hosts the Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project (CRP), which protects rescued chimps, and there are currently more than 109 individuals. First introduced to the islands in 1979, the chimpanzee population now boasts three generations of wild born chimpanzees.

## Wassu Stone Circles

More than ninety stone circle sites have been identified in The Gambia, for the most part sited along the rivers and their tributaries. Wassu Stone Circles near Kuntaur is one of the largest sites, proclaimed a National Monument in 1995 and inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2006. A guided visit will share the history of the site, believed to be burial mounds of kings and chiefs in ancient times over 1,200 years old. These stones are constructed out of skilfully carved laterite pillars between one meter and two meters in height, with the heaviest weighing up to seven tons.





## Kaur

Kaur village is an old trading centre and groundnut depot where guests can learn about groundnut production and Wolof culture. Guests can enjoy a cultural presentation by local people which varies from a talk with the village Alkalo, pounding millet with local women to watching a local performance describing characteristics of their local culture. A visit to Kaur also includes refreshment at Kauren Camp, beautifully located at the top of one of Gambia's only hills that looks down on to the river and wetlands.

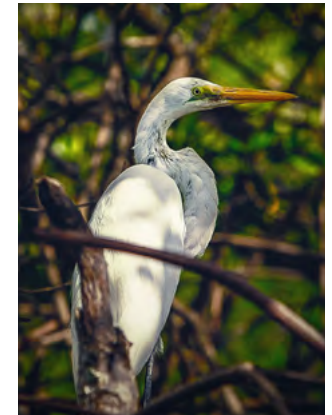
## Njaw Women's Centre

Njaw's cooperative of 80 women was started by a courageous woman from the village called Isatou Ceesay. The women, who creatively dealt with their village's plastic trash problem despite limited resources, are realizing their economic empowerment through their recycled crafts project. This project is under the NGO Gambia Women's Initiative. The initiative exists to support financially poor women in The Gambia with a stated goal of increasing their income, and thus improving the standard of living for their families and communities. Guests can meet women from the project to hear about their activities and have the opportunity to visit their shop offering a range of recycled and other locally-made crafts at fixed prices.



## Juffureh Slave museum and Kunta Kinteh Island (James Island):

The former slave fortress at Kunta Kinteh Island and associated sites at Juffureh/Albreda (former French trading post) were designated a World Heritage Site for their important role in the slave trade, an outstanding memory of this important, although painful, period of human history. They are also famous for their association with Alex Haley's (1976) famous 'Roots' book which traces the ancestry of an African American family through seven generations to the capture of their slave ancestor, Kunta Kinte, in the village of Juffureh. A local guide will tell you about the history, and take you to visit the Slavery Museum and new Visitor Information Centre built using local materials and techniques. Option for sunset drinks by the river and local storytelling with kora player.



## Bird watching at the Bao-bolong wetlands:

There are numerous bird watching opportunities along the NNT. There are over 550 different species of birds in The Gambia living within six protected areas aggregating about 40,000 hectares nationwide, under the protection of the Department of Parks and Wildlife. The Gambia has remained committed to the Wildlife Act, which was signed into law as far back as 1977. This political commitment to ensure that the environment is protected as a natural resource is still at the heart of the national policy. Eco-tourism has massive potential in The Gambia and plans are further afoot to guarantee that every major habitat within the country is covered. If this is fully implemented, five percent of the land within tiny Gambia will be protected. Directly across from Kiang West National Park on the North Bank of the country lies Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve. It features six major bolongs (creeks) that provide excellent opportunities for boating and birding. The pristine reserve is home to several rare and migratory birds, including the African fin foot, pel's fishing owl, ibis and brown necked parrot. Visitors may also see the African clawless otter, West African manatee, baboon and Nile crocodile. Jackals, hyenas and warthogs which are found in the dry areas.



### SECTION 3

# NNT Licensed Tour Guide Associations

Local guides used along the Ninki Nanka Trail are part of several associations of licensed tour guides. In some cases, there are apprentice guides working alongside licensed guides while they undergo training and licensing.



Association      Bird Watcher Association of The Gambia		
About	Services	Contact Information
<p>Dedicated to providing high quality Bird guiding services to visiting Birders to the Gambia. The association controls and regulates the operations of its 75 members, and all the guides are licensed annually by the Gambia Tourism Board.</p> <p>The association provides training and mentoring support to village apprentice guides undergoing training and licensing procedures.</p>	<p>Offer specialized tailor made birding and photographic tours throughout the Gambia and surrounding areas.</p> <p>You can also choose from a wide selection of half days, all inclusive full days and multi days birding tours to some of the best and finest birding locations in the Gambia.</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://birdguidesassociationthegambia.com">birdguidesassociationthegambia.com</a></p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:infogambiabirds@gmail.com">infogambiabirds@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Phone: (+220) 9427886</p> <p>Address: Kotu Creek Birding Hotspot, near Sunset Hotel</p>

Association      Janjanbureh Tour Guide Association		
About	Services	Contact Information
<p>Licensed tour guides by The Gambia Tourism Board and trained under the Youth Empowerment Project programmes for community-based tourism.</p> <p>The association provides training and mentoring support to community-based village apprentice guides undergoing training and licensing procedures.</p>	<p>Ground coordinators and guides for Janjanbureh tours in wildlife, kayaking, bike, hiking, cultural and history walking-tours, and community-based tours in Jamali and Tabanani.</p> <p>Organized and managed by young people with a vision to conserve, protect and promote sustainable, inclusive and community-based tourism principles.</p>	<p>Facebook: @DestinationJanjanburehGMB</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:jjbguides@gmail.com">jjbguides@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Phone: +220 389 2428 or +220 222-2446</p> <p>Address: Janjanbureh Visitor Centre, located inside the Janjanbureh Youth Centre</p>

Association      Official Tourist Guides Association		
About	Services	Contact Information
<p>The OTGA members are official tour guides that are licensed and trained by the Gambia Government to promote a professionalism in the industry that rewards them with reasonable remuneration.</p>	<p>Personalised, individual trips or in small groups to see numerous tourist attractions around the country. Among these are excursions to the Banjul capital, river fishing, Roots trail, go upriver to Janjanbureh, local family visits, Makasutu Culture Forest, the Reptile Farm, camel rides in Tanji and surrounding areas.</p>	<p>Email: <a href="mailto:camarajerreh@hotmail.com">camarajerreh@hotmail.com</a></p> <p>Phone: +220 706 2502/3583</p> <p>Address: PO Box 1298, Banjul</p> <p>The tourist guides can be found just outside all the major hotel resorts</p>



#### SECTION 4

# NNT Shopping and Souvenirs

Around the Tourist Development Area there are craft markets in Banjul, Bakau, Fajara, Kotu, Senegambia, Kololi and Brikama .

On the NNT there are several sites where visitors can buy locally-made products and souvenirs (many of which they can see being made) which it is hoped NNT guides will encourage as one way of maximising local benefit from tourism:



## The Gambia's Good Market

Pop-up market held first Saturday of the month in the coast Banjul area (TDA).

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

- ◇ Fashion and accessories,
- ◇ handicrafts,
- ◇ agro-processed goods,
- ◇ local foods,
- ◇ health and beauty, and related goods



For more information on location go to [www.assertgambia.com](http://www.assertgambia.com)

The market is supported by The International Trade Centre through the Youth Empowerment Project as an access to market and marketing platform for young entrepreneurs.



## Janjanbureh Craft Association Gift Shop

located at the Janjanbureh Youth Centre

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Handmade crafts, accessories, soaps, and textiles produced by the local craft association.

Supporting skills development and employment creation for women and youth through arts and craft.



For more information,  
contact: +220 3235357  
or [mlsaidykhan1992@gmail.com](mailto:mlsaidykhan1992@gmail.com)



# Sites

## Jamali Women's Skills Centre

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Bead & wooden necklaces; wooden bowls & spoons; bead key holders; wrist bands



## Janjanbureh Kankurang Museum & Local Market

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Silver jewellery; food produce; books & leaflets on Gambian culture produced by National Centre of Arts & Culture



## Njaw Women's Recycling Project

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Purses, necklace, earrings, bags, wristbands; tyre seats made out of recycled plastic; body cream & herbal soaps, tie & dye cloth



## Jufureh Craft Market

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Souvenirs such as wood carvings, drums, tie & dye cloth, bead key chains



## Farafenni & Brikama Local Markets

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Local produce e.g. incense; spices, kitchen utensils; nuts, clothes



## Brikama Craft Producers Market

### Locally-made products & souvenirs

Wide range of wood carvings, sand pictures, drums, paintings, balaphons, jewellery; clothes; decorated calabash





## SECTION 5

# NNT Tour Operators and Suppliers

Careful thought has gone into how to ensure that the NNT can be managed responsibly to ensure that upriver tourism is a force for good in the communities along the trail. One management strategy being led by the Gambia Tourism Board (GTB) is to try and regulate which tour operators and boat owners deliver the responsible NNT products by carefully selecting and promoting only those that meet the NNT Responsible Tour Operators and Boat Owners eligibility criteria and code of conduct. Section 6 elaborates on these standards in more detail but essentially they require these operators and boat owners to meet all the appropriate health, safety, insurance and licensing requirements, as well as demonstrating a commitment to additional sustainability and ethical business practices in keeping with the responsible tourism objectives of the Ninki Nanka Trail.



**A full list of approved NNT tour operators and suppliers is not yet complete as the companies are still undergoing responsible tourism training and completing eligibility standards.**

**From 2019-2020, the International Trade Centre (ITC) in partnership The Gambia Tourism Board will be facilitating business development between international buyers and Gambian suppliers until it is fully handed over to local stakeholders.**

**To receive up to date information, please contact Amelia Diaz from ITC at [adiaz@intracen.org](mailto:adiaz@intracen.org).**

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*Note that tour operators are classified as either Category A or Category B in line with the Gambian licensing system established through the Gambian 2011 Tourism Regulations. Category A ground operators are the bigger companies and the smaller operators are category B.*

# GTB Approved NNT Responsible Boat Owners/Equipment Hirers

The NNT boats are typically locally made wooden pirogues that have a lower deck, where food is served, with a bar and toilet, and an upper deck where you can stretch out in the sun or sleep under the stars. The following boat owners/ground tour operators and equipment hirers meet the requirements of the Gambia Tourism Board's (GTBs) NNT Responsible

Boat Owner's Eligibility Criteria and Code of Conduct provided in Section 3. This includes demonstrating that the boats are equipped with all the necessary safety equipment, life jackets, insurances and licenses to meet GTBs requirements for them to operate as a tourist boat.



## Gambia River Excursions

### Description

Kunta Kinteh Roots camp is situated in Albreda, along the banks of the River Gambia, from the camp; one can see the famous Kunta Kinteh Island. The camp is also within a walking distance from the slave museum in Juffureh.

### No. & Capacity of Boats

- ◇ 3 of small pirogues (Jamon and Abdoulahad ) for carrying max. 25 pax. (8 sleeping) Mermaid
- ◇ 1 large pirogue (Mermaid) with max. capacity of 45 pax. (20 sleeping)

### On-board facilities

- ◇ Toilet
- ◇ Bar
- ◇ Solar powered lights for night cruising
- ◇ Kitchen (for freshly prepared meals)
- ◇ Solar-powered fridge for drinks
- ◇ Mattresses, sheets, blankets & mosquito nets for sleeping on-board

### Contact name & details

Bakary Jobe

#### Phone

 +220 7812332

#### Email

 gambiariver@yahoo.com



## Janeya Tours

### Description

Company established in 2012 by Lamin Kinteh who is the manager/owner of the business and an experienced official tourist guide. Provides range of tours to its customers within the Gambia and neighbouring country Senegal. Currently licensed as Gambian owned ground operator. Boat based at Denton Bridge marina.

### No. & Capacity of Boats

- ◇ First boat for 20      ◇ Second boat up to 50
- ◇ Both with sleeping capacity of 20

### On-board facilities

- ◇ Toilet
- ◇ Bar
- ◇ Solar powered lights for night cruising
- ◇ Kitchen (for freshly prepared meals)
- ◇ Solar-powered fridge for drinks

### Contact name & details

Lamin Kinteh

#### Phone

 779-2858

#### Email

 info@janeyatours.com





## Quadru Tours

### Description

Company established in 2018 by Gambian and Sierra Leonian couple living with their children in London. Currently licensed and boat based at Denton Bridge

### No. & Capacity of Boats

- 3 of small pirogues (Jamon and Abdoulahad ) for carrying max. 25 pax. (8 sleeping) Mermaid
- 1 large pirogue (Mermaid) with max. capacity of 45 pax. (10 sleeping)

### On-board facilities

- Toilet
- Bar
- Solar powered lights for night cruising
- Kitchen (for freshly prepared meals)
- Solar-powered fridge for drinks
- PA system, and Bluetooth musical entertainment system

### Contact name & details

Correa Mendy

#### Phone

- +220 7327889
- +220 3215342



## Fairplay Gambia River Adventures

### Description

Social enterprise business based in the cultural and historic town of Janjanbureh in the Central River Region. Provide residential (private charter) boat trips, kayaking and community-based eco- tourism experiences.

The Fula Princess boat is based in Janjanbureh.

### No. & Capacity of Boats

- 1 residential boat, The Fula Princess, with two double berths on the lower deck and space for two double mattresses on the upper deck. | 10 max. carrying 6 max. sleeping

### On-board facilities

- Toilet
- Kitchen galley
- Small bathroom with sit-down shower

### Contact name & details

Dave Adams

#### Phone

- +220-348-4792

#### Email

- fairplaygambia@hotmail.com

## Sleeping On-Board

Sleeping on board is available as an option on some of the NNT Boats. In particular, some of the Gambia River Excursion boats are equipped for dormitory-style accommodation under the boat's canopy on the top-deck, or on the covered bottom deck. Each passenger is provided with their own mosquito net, sheet, blanket and mattress and can enjoy a very atmospheric sunset and night under the stars, and the beautiful scene of the River Gambia in the morning. There is an on-board toilet and guests can shower at a river-side camp where the boats will be moored.

In addition, the Fula Princess owned by Fairplay Gambia River Adventures is a small residential boat that can sleep with two double berths on the lower deck and space for two double mattresses on the upper deck. It also has a small bathroom with a sit-down shower.



## SECTION 6

# NNT Responsible Tour Operator Practices

# NNT Responsible Tour Operator Practices

The development of the NNT as a responsible destination and product range is the result of partnership working between a wide range of stakeholders over several years. A lot of thought has gone into how to manage tourism differently, more responsibly, in order to maximise local benefits and minimise any potential negative impacts of tourism development in such an unspoilt natural area with rich cultural heritage. All stakeholders – government, communities, non-profit, the private sector and tourists/your guests – improve

1. Adherence to GTB's NNT Responsible Tour Operators Eligibility Criteria & Code of Conduct
2. Only hiring GTB's selected NNT Responsible Boat Owners/Equipment Hirers
3. NNT Guides to follow guidance on the 10 roles of the guide to contribute to responsible tourism

formatting in order that tourism in The Gambia can be managed more responsibly in practice.

In this section we outline the particular responsibilities of local and international tour operators and their guides that are required to support the objectives of the NNT through six main practices:

4. NNT Guides to use NNT interpretation plan which contains information on responsible tourism messages and guest orientation for itineraries
5. Inform guests about NNT cultural guidelines
6. Get more involved in responsible tourism in The Gambia & Internationally

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## NNT-The tourism we want!

The Gambia Tourism Board formed the Ninki Nanka Trail Partners Group (a partnership between government, local government, NGOs, the private sector and communities) to help implement our shared Responsible Tourism vision for developing the Ninki Nanka Trail.

Tourism is important in The Gambia. The government's policy is to promote tourism and its contribution to economic growth. The main aims of the NNT are to raise the living standards of Gambians by increasing the contribution of tourism to our economy, and to create fantastic cultural and nature-based experiences for our visitors/guests. This will be achieved through a responsible approach to managing the NNT which benefits host communities, businesses and the environment. This approach will also help us demonstrate that the NNT is truly a responsible destination.

We recognise that in order to achieve this objective it is in everyone's interest to work together with those tour operators bringing tourists and with the industry here in The Gambia. The success of the NNT depends on tour operators (amongst other stakeholders)

adopting responsible business practices that are outlined here in the eligibility criteria and NNT code of conduct for responsible tour operators.

Those who commit to meeting the criteria and following the NNT code can benefit from the official status, NNT brand, and promotional benefits as a NNT responsible tour operator. There is also a NNT responsible tour operator's manual and training opportunities to support those businesses who wish to work towards meeting the requirements of the NNT code of conduct and improving their responsible tourism/sustainability standards.

Through this code of conduct we share the aspirations of the Responsible Tourism Policy of the Gambia, the Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism and the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to join with us to create better places for people to live in and for people to visit

# Ten Eligibility Criteria to become GTB Official NNT Responsible Tour Operator

1. Commitment to work towards improving **Responsible Tourism (RT) standards/international sustainability certification in the long term**
2. Commitment to **values of RT spelt out in the code of conduct**
3. Complete **GTB responsible tour operators training certificate**
4. Commitment to meeting international tour operator's **sustainable suppliers requirements**
5. **10% ticket price of NNT packages** to a central community fund for selected community & conservation projects
6. Demonstrate **responsible tour operator practices/operations** as outlined in the NNT responsible tour operators code of conduct and manual
7. Demonstrate fulfilling **national legal tourism operational requirements, including ground tour operators license and public liability insurance**
8. Agree to **sign GTB Code of conduct** for responsible NNT tour operators
9. Agree to the **monitoring** of your RT performance by GTB
10. Agree to share with GTB your **guest feedback surveys** on the NNT

# GTB Code of Conduct for Responsible NNT Tour Operators

These codes were agreed through a stakeholder consultation process with local ground operators and international tour operators through direct and e-communications. They are divided into 3 main areas of sustainable business management practices aimed at operating as an ethical business, achieving community and cultural benefits and maintaining the integrity of the environment:

## Be an Ethical Business

### ◇ Legal compliances

Observe national laws and regulations

### ◇ Employment practices

Respect contractual agreements with your employees; maintain a policy on gender equality, diversity and decent working conditions.

### ◇ Staff training in RT

Train staff on your environmental policy, community host/ guest relationships, human rights and child exploitation issues.

### ◇ Health, safety & quality standards

Ensure health, safety and security measures (including emergency procedures) are in place for guests and staff. This includes respecting requirement to only use GTB approved NNT Responsible Boat Owners for NNT products.

### ◇ Maximise use of local products and services

Help the local economy

### ◇ Contracts/code of conduct with local suppliers/small enterprises

Respect contractual agreements and fixed prices with suppliers (including CBT products) and encourage them to adhere to responsible tourism values.

### ◇ Guest information/codes of conduct

Provide written information as tips, cultural guidelines or codes of conduct on responsible travel to your guests.

### ◇ Appropriate use of RT claims in marketing/promotion

Ensure that the claims you make to being responsible are accurate, and that the images you use to promote The Gambia are socially inclusive and do not give cause for offence to communities in The Gambia.

### ◇ Monitoring

A guest feedback system is in place, together with analysis of the results and negative feedback and that responses made to this are recorded.

## Respect Your Host and Our Common Heritage

### ◇ Actively support community development initiatives

Apart from the payment of services, an agreed % is added in the ticket price of NNT packages towards a central community fund for selected community and conservation projects

### ◇ Actively contributes to protection/promotion of local culture

Research/ learn about the Gambia destination to inform yourself and guide guests about local customs, traditions and social conditions and how to behave responsibly.

### ◇ Negative impact on communities

Work with NNT communities to identify potential negative impacts of visitors (for example on water, environment, social issues, child protection) and actions for how to reduce them.

### ◇ Local Sourcing

Provide opportunities for guests to buy local products & services at a fair price.

### ◇ Build support systems

Provide support to local suppliers to help improve their product/capacity.

### ◇ Tour income and tips

Ensure that a transparent system is in place for income and tips to be distributed fairly to relevant parties

## Respect Your Host and Our Common Heritage

### ◇ Environmentally-friendly sourcing

Purchase ecologically sustainable products (e.g. using renewable energy, sustainable technologies and building materials, locally sourced goods), and avoid purchasing anything made using endangered plants or animals.

### ◇ Prioritise accommodation providers with sustainable/ responsible practices

Select accommodation providers carefully as part of NNT packages and encourage them to work towards a quality standard and sustainability certification

### ◇ Reduce waste, pollution & use of plastics

Encourage recycling and other waste management and reduction methods. Where possible do away with plastic.

### ◇ Reduce energy and water consumption

Measure consumption and encourage guests to reduce water and energy consumption whenever possible

### ◇ Climate change is real

Educate guests and staff on simple measures to use to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### ◇ Promotion of biodiversity and greening of the environment

Provide information and support your guides to encourage guests and staff to respect wildlife and their natural habitats

### ◇ Business has an environmental policy and management plan

Build an environmental policy and management plan within the business that recognises that the natural environment is a vital resource for the livelihoods of communities as well as being a major tourism asset.

## NNT Cultural Guidelines



A set of five cultural guidelines have been produced which are designed to help bridge gaps in understanding between tourists and local people to help create respectful, enjoyable, mutually beneficial cross-cultural encounters. These are:

### i. The Gambian Way

provides general information and advice for your guests stay in The Gambia so that they are well equipped for their travels in a new country with a different culture to theirs.

See the appendices/NNT resources page on-line for full details of all these guidelines.

Tour operators should provide these guidelines to their guests as appropriate to their itineraries – and ensure that they read and understand them prior to arrival at these destinations.

*\*Note the original version of the NNT 'Gambian Way' and 'Guest Way' were produced in 2018 through a collaborative process between staff from Gambia Tourism Board, Ninki Nanka Encounters (Gambian Charity), Leeds Beckett University, Institute of Travel & Tourism of The Gambia and the community of Ndemban.*

### ii. The Guest Way

provides general information for communities hosting your guests to assist them to understand them and make them feel as comfortable as possible while they are visiting.

## Be Aware of Responsible Tourism Issues along the NNT

The trail is designed bearing in mind the three main areas of sustainable business management practices aimed at operating as an ethical business, achieving community and cultural benefits and maintaining the integrity of the environment, as outlined in the NNT Responsible Tour Operators Code of Conduct in Section 3. In particular, there are a number of key responsible tourism issues along the NNT that tour operators and guides need to be aware of along the trail so they can support current and future activities for addressing them:



### Child protection:

Unfortunately, child sex tourism exists in The Gambia. Politely explain and enforce the rule that visitors should not allow children into their rooms or give gifts/sweets etc direct to children.



### Plastic Bottles:

There are not currently any public facilities in The Gambia for recycling plastic waste. Advise visitors to reduce their plastic use as much as possible. Where the use of plastic cannot be avoided, it can be collected and given to the women cooperative in Njaw who will reuse or recycle it into sellable craft products, or for general reuse by the communities along the way.



### Waste Management:

Waste management facilities along the NNT are currently very limited, although plans are underway to improve this situation. Actively explain why & how visitors can reduce/reuse/recycle/responsibly dispose of their waste and reduce their water consumption. In Ndemban for example there is water scarcity so using the bucket for shower/toilet is advisable.



### Cultural Guidelines:

There is often significant cultural differences between international visitors and their Gambian hosts which can be a source of mutual misunderstanding. Inform visitors about responsible behaviour before and during the NNT – make sure they read/understand the NNT cultural guidelines about 'The Gambian Way' and other local guidelines as appropriate.



### **Irresponsible Giving:**

Well-intentioned gifts and donations from visitors to local people can create tensions and encourage begging and unbalanced/unhealthy tourist-host relationships if not managed responsibly. Communities along the NNT have identified their needs and projects. Advise visitors about these locally selected initiatives along the NNT and how best to make their donation. Explain to visitors that a certain percentage of the trip fees is added on the ticket and contributed towards community development of the various places visited.



### **Responsible Guiding:**

The standard of guiding in The Gambia varies. NNT guides need to be of the best standard and supported to learn about nature, stories, history and communities along the NNT, and encouraged if they are not sure about something to let visitors know and then find out.



### **Responsible Wildlife Watching:**

The NNT takes your guests to a beautiful yet fragile natural environment, including protected National Parks. Advise visitors and your suppliers that they should treat animals as kindly as possible on the NNT in line with the specific wildlife guidance provided. Along the trail we do not use animals for travel or other functions. See the ABTA wildlife guidance for further :



### **Responsible Shopping:**

Cultural misunderstandings whilst making a purchase in local markets and lack of familiarity with bartering can make shopping an unenjoyable experience for your guests, deterring them from spending locally. Advise your guests about opportunities to buy products and services locally, and how to barter respectfully or give local information about the cost of things.



### **Manage tipping:**

The NNT will take your guests to communities with very low incomes and those providing services will be keen to receive extra tips. Protect visitors from being constantly asked for tips by actively managing this on their behalf in line with a set company tipping policy e.g. including tips in the package fee, agreeing to contribute donations to NNT community development fund



SECTION 7:

# The Gambia In Brief & Pre-Departure Information

# Country Information



## Location

West Africa (one of the smallest countries in mainland Africa)



## Area

11,295 sq. km (4361 sq. miles)



## Capital

Banjul



## Currency

Dalasi (GMD), pronounced da-la-si



## Time Zone

Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)



## Population

1.8 million



## Official Language

English



## Climate

The country enjoys virtually universally uninterrupted sunshine and high daytime temperatures with almost no rainfall from November to June.



## Other Languages

Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, Jola, Sarahule, Serer, Manjago, Creole (known as Aku)

## History and Politics

Between 1651 and 1661 part of Gambia was (indirectly) a colony of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Colanders settled on the Kunta Kinteh Island (James Island), which they called St. Andrews Island, and used it as a trade base from 1651 until its captivity by the British in 1661. In 1888, The Gambia became a separate colonial entity.

The Gambia achieved independence on 18th February, 1965, as a constitutional monarchy within the Commonwealth. Five years later, on the 24th April, 1970, The Gambia became a Republic within the Commonwealth, with Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara as the first Prime Minister and head of state.

On 22nd July, 1994, the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) seized power in a military coup d'état. After a strong showing at the polls in 1996, retired colonel Yahya AJJ Jammeh was sworn into office as the second President of the Republic of The Gambia on 6th November, 1996. In 2016 a new administration won the election and the new President, Adama Barrow, was sworn-in in January 2017.

## Geography

The Gambia is one of the smallest countries in West Africa located mid-way on the bulge of the West African Coast and stretches 350 kilometres (km) inland from the West to East on either side of The River Gambia. As shown in the map below, it is bound on the North, South and East by the Republic of Senegal and to the West by the Atlantic Ocean. The River Gambia runs the entire length of the country from the Futa Jallon Highlands in the Republic of Guinea to the Atlantic Ocean and divides the country into two halves the North and the South Banks.



## Peoples and Culture

In The Gambia, there are five major language groups: Fula, Mandinka, Jola, Serahuli, Wolof. Each of these linguistic groups have diverse cultures which their language seeks to express in proverbs, myths, riddles, sayings etc. In other words, in The Gambia language helps to express culture, alongside dress, food, music, hairstyles, dance and cultural traditions. The social fabric of The Gambia is based on family networks often stretching into neighbouring countries where the extended family takes responsibility for the well-being and maintenance of the family. Family networks provide support systems to limit the negative effects of poverty which is on the increase. The rich diversity of different cultures within The Gambian is not well known outside of the country and the NNT offers a great opportunity for your guests to experience and learn about it for themselves.

## Religious Diversity and Tolerance

The Gambia is one of the most religious tolerant nations in the world. Indeed, most people are inter-related, regardless of their religious backgrounds; it is not uncommon to find Muslims and Christians married to each other, or closely connected. Religious days and feasts – both Christian and Muslim - are celebrated nationally. This has been the case since time immemorial, and continues today. Muslims account for 85% of the population. The other 15% is comprised of Christians and practitioners of other African traditional religions.

## Livelihoods

Agriculture is the main economic activity and this sector accounts for the largest proportion of economically active persons with more than half of the population engaged in subsistence farming, livestock rearing and groundnut cultivation. Groundnuts are the main cash crop but efforts to diversify have brought in sesame growing, which is predominantly grown by women. Rice is the staple food but the country has not yet reached self-sufficiency in rice production thus leading to huge importations of the commodity. In addition to agriculture, tourism and commerce are important sources of foreign exchange as well as of employment.

## Major Festivals and Celebrations

All festivals and traditional celebrations are accompanied with diverse music, dance and drumming which plays an important part of all Gambian cultures. See the Gambia Tourism Board's national annual calendar of cultural events in Section 5 for some of the main Gambian festivals and celebrations to include in NNT packages.

## Getting Around & 'What To Do'

Green tourist taxis are parked within all the main resort/hotel areas to take visitors to wherever they want to go, with fixed prices for the main touristic destinations. Up-country travels are facilitated by the GSTC bus service which leaves from the company headquarters in Kanifing.

Besides the NNT, there are many different excursions designed to give the tourist a good feel of The Gambia which you can find out more about on the GTB website: <http://www.visitthegambia.gm/what-to-do> or the Tourism and Travel Association of the Gambia website: <http://www.ttag.gm/excursions>. Many of the existing excursions are conducted in the coastal area but others take place in rural Gambia

## Shopping

Despite the influence of tourism in creating mass production of some imported souvenirs, there are some beautiful, original and good quality handmade items available for purchase, such as leather handbags and shoes, wood carvings, hand woven cloths or recycled and silver jewellery. Special items can be tailor made to order for your guests, typically available in two or three days but they are worth the wait. Guests will need to be prepared to do some bargaining, the price is (almost) always negotiable!

There are a wide range of shopping experiences available in The Gambia from the colour and bustle of local markets, seeing producers work in their own compounds to the air-conditioned and fixed price comfort of hotel shops.

## Where to Eat and Drink:

In addition to restaurant and bar facilities in hotels, there are many restaurants and fast food places to eat around the coast. If you are around the main resorts, in addition to the facilities in the hotels, there are many restaurants offering international, Gambian, Lebanese, Indian, Italian, Mexican, Asian and other cuisines.

However, there may be challenges sometimes eating with European health standards up-country if not on an official excursion. Sharing food with friends and visitors bring great experiences, offering fruitful exchanges and lasting memories. In the Gambia people love to make new friends and sharing food is a special way of socializing. The most popular local drinks are Wonjo and Baobab. Wonjo juice is made from the dried red flowers of the sorrel, which are boiled with sugar to make a refreshing, sweet drink full of Vitamin C. Baobab juice is made from the fruit of the baobab tree.

# Tourism Industry Associations

## Gambia Hotel Association (GHA)

This is the umbrella association for most hotels in the Gambia. The Gambia has different types of accommodations including hotels, self-catering apartments, timeshares, lodges and guest houses. Hotels are mainly used by package tour companies, whilst the other accommodation categories are frequently used by independent travellers. The hotels are rated from 1 to 5 star based on the products and services they offer. For more information on Gambian hotels and the GHA please see their website: [www.gambiahotels.gm](http://www.gambiahotels.gm)

## Tourism and Travel Association of the Gambia

The travel and tourism association of the Gambia was originally formed as the association of Ground Tour Operators. The TTAG has since opened its doors to other actors of the tourism industry like restaurants, bars car hire and shops. To find out more about the association and the different tour operators who are members visit their [website: www.ttag.gm](http://www.ttag.gm)

## Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Responsible Tourism (ASSERT)

The travel and tourism association of the Gambia was originally formed as the association of Ground Tour Operators. The TTAG has since opened its doors to other actors of the tourism industry like restaurants, bars car hire and shops. To find out more about the association and the different tour operators who are members visit their [website: www.ttag.gm](http://www.ttag.gm)

# Pre-Departure Information

## Health and Medical facilities

Although inoculations are not compulsory for entry from the EU, certain medication, including anti-malarial tablets, yellow fever, hepatitis and typhoid vaccinations are recommended. The last outbreak of yellow fever in The Gambia was in 1978 and a yellow fever vaccination certificate is no longer required for entry into The Gambia. However, a certificate will need to be shown when passing between The Gambia and Senegal, or when travelling from another country that has yellow fever.

Anti-malaria medicine should, however, be strongly recommended to your guests as there is a risk of malaria.

Please ensure you advise your guests to consult with their GP or health clinic prior to travel, who will advise on recommended vaccinations and prescribe anti-malarial drugs. For further information visit: <https://www.gambia.co.uk/medication>.

Should your guests become ill during their stay in The Gambia there are several hospitals and clinics operated by the Government, as well as by private practitioners which provide both therapeutic and preventative healthcare. Details of these local healthcare providers will be provided by your accompanying lead guide.

## Travel Insurance

Advise your guests to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering the following as a minimum: injury, death, illness, personal belongings and baggage damage/loss and flight delay.

## Emergency Procedures/Contacts

All NNT Responsible Tour Operators and Boat Owners and their staff are expected to have their own emergency procedures in place in case of any health and safety issues during a NNT trip. To support these procedures it is advised that you ask your NNT guests to complete an optional form with some personal information prior to their arrival in case of any emergency including: an emergency contact number; details regarding any significant health conditions and allergies; special dietary requirements; and name, policy number and emergency contact number for their insurance provider.

In light of meeting data protection requirements, this personal information should be kept confidential and destroyed at the end of their NNT trip. All NNT tour leaders should carry this guest information and your company emergency procedures and contact numbers with them at all times.

## Visa Requirements

Citizens of the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other nations with a reciprocal visa abolition agreement with The Gambia do not require a visa to enter the country not exceeding 90 days. All other nationalities should possess a visa.

## Cultural Guidelines

Many visitors to The Gambia will not have the experience to understand life and culture in The Gambia. To help raise their awareness about how to behave responsibly, and encourage positive and respectful encounters between guests and local people, make sure to provide all of your guests with the Ninki Nanka Trail cultural guidelines. These include 'The Gambian Way' which provides guidance in visiting The Gambia generally, plus cultural guidance for the community-based tourism (CBT) villages on the trail, namely Ndemban, Tabanani and Jamali. In addition, note that these CBT villages have also been provided with guidance on 'The Guest's Way' to help with mutual understanding. These cultural guidelines are provided in Section 5.

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***All tour operators delivering excursions on the NNT should send their customers a copy of these guidelines on booking, and then remind them about them during an initial briefing / orientation meeting in The Gambia.***

SECTION 8:

# Cultural Guidelines and Appendices

# The Gambian Way

The Gambian Way provides general information and advice on your stay in The Gambia so that you are well equipped for your travels in a new country with a different culture to yours. Please take your time to read through these and enjoy your stay!



***Faroolu meŋ be naaneeriŋ, woolu le  
jiyoo ka bori ñoo kaŋ***

***Rice fields with the same borders share the same waters***

***Or, “we’re all in this together”***



————— Mandinka Proverb —————

## Food sharing

At your homestay you may be offered food to share with your families. Invitations to share food are genuine and sharing food from a communal plate is very much a reflection of the communal way of life in The Gambia. Even if you are not hungry, it’s polite to accept a little of the food that is on offer. Ideally wash your hands before you start. Make sure that you eat with your right hand as the left hand is considered unclean. Eat from your side of the plate - your host will typically take charge of the plate and make sure that the tastiest bits are distributed evenly. Hold the bowl steady with your left hand. If you pick up food with your hand and then do not eat it, don’t return it to the communal plate. It is the custom to leave the last bits for the children.

## Money

Cash is king in The Gambia. Even in the central Tourist Development Area (TDA) it can be difficult to pay with a credit card and it can be more costly. Ensure you carry sufficient cash. You will need small amounts of change in local shops.

## Internet

Outside of the TDA it’s difficult to connect to WiFi. Be prepared for this and enjoy the digital detox!



## Electricity

There may be times when there are breaks in the supply of electricity. Most of the camps along the trail rely on generator power for electricity and / or have generators as a backup. Try to use electricity sparingly as there is limited generation capacity and recurrent electricity shortages due to capacity issues. It's better for the environment too.

## Drinking water

For short visits to The Gambia it is not advised to drink the tap water. The tap water is purified but there may still be some impurities in the water that your system is not used to and that could give you diarrhea. It's best to stick with bottled water during your stay. There will be sufficient opportunities along the way for you to purchase bottled water, or you can bring water-purifying tablets.

## Water for washing

Water can also be in short supply. Please use sparingly. Hot water for showering is not available everywhere. Sometimes has to be brought from a well. Please be patient. Your hosts want you to know that if running water is not available they are not being inhospitable, these breaks in supply are part of village life. If the shower is not working you can wash using a bucket and pourer in the traditional way.

## Toilets

We have endeavored to build in plenty of 'comfort stops' on the tour, but be prepared for some al fresco toilet stops along the way. Bring your own toilet paper as this is not always available, even in designated rest rooms.

## Crime

The Gambia is considered a relatively safe country, but do be sensible with regards to your personal safety and belongings. Be aware of pickpockets in crowded places and be careful in isolated places after dark. There is no safe/ safety valuables deposit on the boat, so you are responsible for carrying your valuables and documents with you at all times.

## Bumstering

Bumsters in The Gambia are generally harmless, unemployed young men who try to hassle and hustle tourists into giving them their money or some other benefit for services such as tour guiding, help with shopping or 'romantic friendships'. You will mainly be 'bumstered' in the TDA and receive much less hassle in the villages.

## Alcohol in villages

Drinking alcohol is not part of the culture in Ndemban village, but your hosts understand that this is something which many of us like to do and have provided cold beers in the restaurant for you to purchase and enjoy. Please drink responsibly – one or two beers is fine, but please avoid drunkenness. Your hosts have requested that you only consume alcohol in the restaurant area and not in your room as this is their private space and family home.

## Alcohol at the TDA (Coast).

Alcohol is easily available in the TDA and is available for purchase at the homestay villages. Remember that The Gambia is a Muslim country and while a beer or two is acceptable, drunkenness is not.

## Smoking

Smoking is prohibited by law in public places. Please do not smoke inside in village compound. It is okay to smoke near the restaurant areas, but not inside the restaurant unless it is observed as permissible. It's unusual for women to smoke, so if you are a woman smoker you may get stared at a little bit.

## Food hygiene

Your homestay host families and the Ninki Nanka boat crew have all received appropriate training regarding food hygiene.

## Begging

It's appropriate to give money to beggars with an obvious disability. Don't give money to children.

## Bartering

Good-natured bartering is expected but don't drive a hard bargain, remember that whoever you are buying from needs to make a living and probably needs the money more than you. Expect to pay around 30% – 40% of the initial asking price when bartering.

## Photography

Your guide will provide advice on whether or not photography is appropriate. Always ask permission before taking a photograph, particularly in public places such as the market. Don't take photos of children, security points, in a mosque or when people are praying.

## LGBT+ travelers

Although the new government in The Gambia has promised not to prosecute same-sex couples the government has not yet repealed laws that criminalize same-sex conduct. According to the Indy 100 The Gambia is still considered intolerant towards LGBT+ people.

## Greetings

Gambians attach great importance to traditional greetings. Avoid immediately getting down to the subject matter and spend some time saying hello and asking how they are. See link below for further guidance.

## Greeting the Alkalo (village chief).

It's traditional for visitors to a village to be welcomed by the Alkalo. Though not expected, you can present a small gift to the Alkalo when you meet him. Some suggestions are: kola nuts, dates, a bag of sugar, a loaf of bread or some soap.

## Dancing

You will often be welcomed to a village with a dance. You will be expected to join in - try not to feel too self-conscious and enjoy it!

## GMT (Gambian Maybe Time).

Sometimes there will be delays, things might not run to plan, or exactly to time. Try not to stress about this and relax into Gambian Maybe Time.

## Small gifts

You may want to bring some for a homestay family or villagers, for example pens, pencils and pencil sharpeners, rulers, notebooks or erasers for children; gifts of cosmetics, nail varnish and costume jewellery for the women' and sugar, soap or dates for the other family members. Do not give gifts or sweets directly to children as this might encourage begging. Give gifts for children to the head of the family for them to distribute.

## Communal gift giving

Communities are discouraged from pressuring guests for gifts. However, if guests want to provide a larger gift to village communities (e.g. a sack of rice) these should always be distributed via the Alkalo (the village headman). Alternatively, there are a number of village projects and the community-based tourism clubs that can receive gifts. It's fairer and more transparent to 'give back' through these projects rather than giving money directly to people you meet along the way. Ask your guide about details of the projects that you can contribute to. Guests will be encouraged to give larger gifts communally to ensure that distribution is fair.

## Giving to schools is per basis of inquiry

Gifts for school can be welcomed and would be given headteacher who will put them in the register and distribute them fairly. Local ground handlers can manage upon request.

## Plastic water bottles

These can be reused, just leave them in your room when you have finished with them and they will be put to good use.

## Clothing

The villagers accept that you might want to wear swimwear if you are swimming in the creek, but only wear swimwear near the creek and when about to swim. In the village you should be reasonably well-covered - women should ensure that skirts and shorts cover your knees. Men should not wear very short, shorts. It makes sense to cover up anyway to get some protection from sunburn and mosquito bites. Women should cover head and shoulders if invited into a mosque.

## Taboo topics

Village communities have identified some private or potentially sensitive some topics which they would rather not discuss. These include female genital mutilation, politics, tribal politics, homosexuality, criticism of their religion and certain cultural practices such as polygamy. Although you may not necessarily hold the same beliefs as your host please be respectful of them and non-judgmental.

## Taboo behaviours

Displays of public affection are not considered appropriate. You can hold hands with your loved one, but no kissing in public please!

## Privacy

Gambian village life is very communal and there may be different expectations regarding personal space. If you feel a little overwhelmed at times politely excuse yourself and take some time to relax in your room. Similarly, it's important to observe the privacy of your homestay family, for example please do not enter a mosque without permission, women should not approach near male circumcision ceremonies and if you come across someone who is praying try to avoid crossing their path or distracting them.

## The Ninki Nanka Dragon

is a legendary creature in West African folklore. The animal is believed to inhabit the quieter creeks of the River Gambia. It is said to be extremely large and very dangerous, although some view the Ninki Nanka to be lucky. The people that you may meet along the Ninki Nanka trail take the Ninki Nanka dragon quite seriously and many believe firmly in its existence. You should be mindful and respectful of these beliefs.



### For further information see here:

<http://www.accessgambia.com/information/traditional-greetings.html>

<http://www.accessgambia.com/information/traditional-phrases.html>

<http://www.accessgambia.com/information/a-z-gambia.html>

<https://www.bradtguides.com/destinations/africa/gambia.html>

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/the-gambia>

# The Guests' Way

These guidelines have been developed to help communities understand their guests and make them feel as comfortable as possible during their visit.

Guests have also received cultural guidance which will help them to understand how to behave appropriately and respectfully in your home.

Any concerns about a guest's stay, please do make sure to mention this to the lead guide so that any problems can be managed and dealt with for future visits.

These guidelines are shared throughout the villages, not just for homestay families.

## Dancing

Your guests may not always want to join in dancing. This is not a sign of disrespect, it's just that maybe your visitors are shy and reserved (and some just might not be very good dancers!). Your performances are still appreciated even if some choose not to join in. Gentle encouragement might be appreciated, or help to learn the basic steps, but if someone is really not keen to dance let them relax and watch the entertainment. They might join in later!

## Small gifts

Your guests may bring a small gift for your family. That is part of their custom to bring gifts to their hosts when staying with them. Your guests will not expect any gifts in return.

## Contact details

Please do not ask your guests for their contact details as this might make them feel uncomfortable. It's OK to accept their contact details if they offer them.

## Children

To ensure their safety children they should not be allowed in the guests' rooms. Please help to reinforce this message by telling your children that this is not allowed. Please also discourage your children from asking guests for sweets, pens, other small gifts or water bottles.

## Alcohol

Guests will have been told that they can enjoy some beers at the restaurant. They will also have been told that they are not to drink in your compound. If you are concerned about a guest's drinking, do talk to the lead guide about it.

## Smoking

Guests have also been asked not to smoke in their homestay rooms. You can ask your guest to refrain from smoking or speak to the lead guide if you are concerned.

## Taboo topics

There aren't many topics which are taboo for your guests, although do be aware that people can be reluctant to discuss how much they earn and sometimes women don't always want to discuss if / why they don't have children, or how old they are.

## Privacy

Your guests are unlikely to be used to living communally and might live alone or with a small family unit. This means they may have different expectations regarding personal space. When they are in their room, they probably want to have some quiet time to relax and have some privacy.

## Bartering

Guests may be used to having fixed prices and many will find bartering very uncomfortable.

## Other behaviors

. There may be other things which your guests do which you find odd, or uncomfortable with. There may well be some cultural differences such as religion, marriage, not eating meat, behavior around animals and so on. It's unlikely that your guests will deliberately cause offence and if they have behaved inappropriately it's probably unintentional. If you have any concerns do raise this with your lead guide.

## And finally

Try and find some common ground with your guests, it's surprising, despite our differences, how much we share and have in common.

# Cultural Festivals

Name and who	When	Description
<p><b>BANJUL CULTURAL FESTIVAL</b> By Banjul City Council, Banjul Sports Committee and Capital FM</p>	<p><b>25TH DECEMBER -1ST JANUARY</b> ANNUAL</p>	<p>It's a long-standing display of the local Banjul culture and masquerade parade annually from Christmas day to New Year's in January. Banjul, the capital city is a melting pot of ethnicities. All the major ethnic groups in the country are found within the City of Banjul, as well as migrants from the neighbouring countries, vying to showcase their masquerades and traditional performances at this time of the year.</p>
<p><b>JAJANBUREH KANKURANG FESTIVAL</b></p>	<p><b>JANUARY (SECOND WEEKEND)</b> ANNUAL</p>	<p>The Kankurang, a masquerade tradition associated with the rites of passage or initiation into manhood is practiced by Mandinka communities in The Gambia, Senegal and Guinea Bissau. The term Kankurang is referred to as a combination of the Mandinka words 'Kango' and 'Kurang' which literally translate as "voice" and "enforce" respectively. Thus the term could be said to refer to the empowerment of the voice in order to enforce the rules set by members of Mandinka society.</p> <p>The Kankurang protects the traditions of Mandinka society and gives voice to the young people going through their rites of passage. This initiation is a way of graduating the youth to full membership of their communities by learning the importance of community living. From 2018 the festival was revived from the last time it was staged in the 80s.</p>
<p><b>SANYANG INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL</b> By Sanyang Village Development Committee</p>	<p><b>JANUARY (LAST WEEKEND)</b> ANNUAL</p>	<p>Sanyang as the origin of the Kombo settlement is occupied by several ethnicities whose activities mainly centered on the sea trade. This festival showcases diverse culture and traditions of the kombos from the 4 human life cycle ceremonies of birth, circumcision, marriage and burial with their performance traditions. Its highlight is a daylong cultural and musical jambo-ree at the beachside till day break.</p>
<p><b>KARTONG FESTIVAL</b> By Kartong Community Development Association</p>	<p><b>FEBRUARY (2ND WEEKEND)</b> ANNUAL</p>	<p>This festival includes a cultural display of various choreographic dances and traditional music of the two border communities of Kartong in the Gambia and Casamance in Senegal for a long weekend. It involves drumming and dance training sessions for visitors wanting to learn the rhythms of the Djembe and the two cultures separated by an imaginary boundary's music and dance.</p>
<p><b>SUKUTA DEMBADU CARNIVAL &amp; CULTURAL FESTIVAL</b> By Sukuta Youth Development Association</p>	<p><b>MARCH ( 1ST WEEK)</b> ANNUAL</p>	<p>Sukuta Dembadu Carnival and Cultural Festival is to recognize, celebrate and appreciate all aspects of the Kombo cultures. Sukuta Sabiji as the oldest settlement that leased the Island of Banjul to the British, safeguards the intangible cultural heritages of the people of the Kombos</p>

Name and who	When	Description
<p><b>BURENG (KOOSEE) CULTURAL FESTIVAL</b> By Bureng Cultural Society</p>	<p><b>MARCH (MID )</b> ANNUAL</p>	<p>A Mandinka festival with the quest to preserve traditional cultural practices. This is a festival that takes place after harvests when food is abundant and people have plenty of time to relax before the rainy season sets in again and the fields demand a return to work. The festival showcases rare Manding masquerades such as the Koosee, konoo which were threatened with extinction.</p>
<p><b>INTERNATIONAL ROOTS FESTIVAL</b> By Bureng Cultural Society</p>	<p><b>MAY (2ND WEEK)</b> BIENNIAL (The last roots festival was in May 2016. The 13th. Edition did not take place in 2018 due to a change of government. There is the intention to rebrand the festival with possibly a new date)</p>	<p>The Gambia's most popular international festival. Organized once in every two years, the festival programme is characterized by visits to heritage sites relating to slavery; the futampaf, a Jola traditional initiation/ rites of passage ceremony from youth to adulthood in which visitors can partake; and diverse cultural performances.</p>



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**The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa** addresses the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in African.

**The Youth Empowerment Project (YEP), EU-funded** aims to reduce migration pressures through increased job opportunities and income prospects for youth.

**The International Trade Centre** is a joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations implementing YEP.

**The Gambia Tourism Board** is the institution mandated by government to promote The Gambia as a tourism destination. The agency is responsible for promoting foreign and local investment in the tourism industry as well as advising the tourism sector and markets.

**The Tekki Fii project** follows YEP as an initiative of the Government of The Gambia and international development partners to significantly scale quality job opportunities available to young Gambians.

**The TekkiFii media** campaign is to inform young Gambians about ongoing support programmes to change perceptions regarding irregular migration while showcasing them to make it at home.



This project is funded by the European Union



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